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## IN MEMORIAM

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# William Meade Clark

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W. GORDON McCABE, Esq., President,  
Virginia Historical Society,  
Richmond, Virginia.

Dear Sir:

The undersigned, who were appointed a Committee at the last meeting of the Executive Committee of the Virginia Historical Society to prepare a sketch of the life of the late Reverend Dr. William Meade Clark, beg leave to hand you the enclosed paper which is a very imperfect portrayal of our deceased friend.

Yours very truly,

JOHN PEYTON MCGUIRE,  
DANIEL GRINNAN,  
Committee.

The Reverend William Meade Clark, D. D., Rector of St. James Church, Richmond, Editor of the Southern Churchman, and for the last fifteen years a member of the Executive Committee of the Virginia Historical Society, died at his home in Richmond on April 29th, 1914, after a long illness.

Dr. Clark was a native of Virginia and was reared in Halifax County in that State where he was born on May 5th, 1855. His father, the late Reverend John T. Clark, of that County,

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was one of the most excellent clergymen of the Episcopal Church in Virginia, and owned the plantation upon which he resided. Dr. Clark grew up under the best influences. There he learned the lessons of manly independence and unpretentious piety, laid the foundations of solid learning and imbibed the best traditions of old Virginia citizenship. After leaving school he attended the University of Virginia where he remained for several sessions. While there he suffered a severe accident which impaired his physical activity for the rest of his life. Leaving the University of Virginia he entered the Theological Seminary near Alexandria, where in 1880 he graduated and was ordained deacon. The following year he was ordained Priest by the late Bishop Whittle. Entering upon the active work of the ministry, his first charge was St. James' Parrish in Mecklenburg County, Virginia; afterwards he served successively in Amherst County, Virginia, at Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and at the Church of the Good Shepherd in Raleigh, North Carolina. From 1890 to 1896 he was Rector of St. George's, that fine old church in Fredericksburg, Virginia. In 1896 he succeeded the Reverend John K. Mason as Rector of St. James Church in the City of Richmond, a position which he held up to the time of his death. He soon established himself in the confidence and affection, not only of his own congregation, but of the people of that City. He was a strong, direct and eloquent preacher.

Soon after taking charge of St. James Church Dr. Clark was appointed Editor of the *Southern Churchman*, a position which he continued to hold until his death. His articles in this paper showed the firm convictions of a vigorous and well balanced mind. He was no controversialist and contented himself with the positive affirmation of essential matters and the advocacy of those things which made for the progress of his Church at large and of his Master's Kingdom.

It was inevitable that a man possessed of the strong understanding and versatility of Dr. Clark should be called upon to fill other positions. For many years he was one of the two examining chaplains of the Diocese of Virginia, and a member of the Executive Committee of the Diocesan Missionary Society. He was a Trustee of the Bishop Payne Divinity

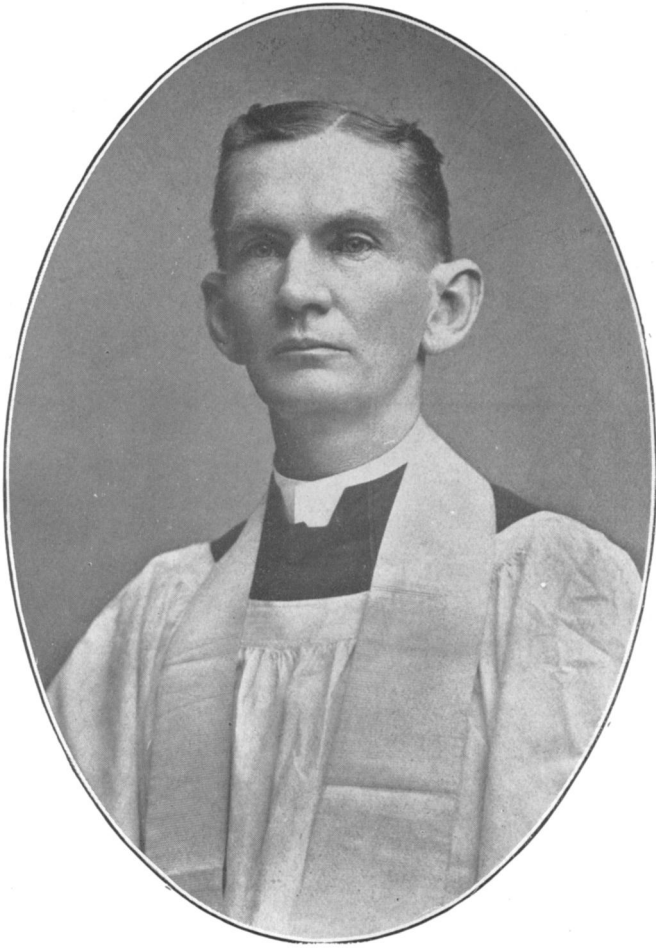
### III

School, an institution for the education of colored clergymen, a work in which he was deeply interested. As a deputy on numerous occasions to the General Conventions of his Church he was a recognized leader in that body, as he was in the Council of the Diocese of Virginia. At different times he served upon important committees connected with the work of his Church. In all of these positions he took an active and influential part, serving with conscientious fidelity. He was appointed to fill the chair of Ecclesiastical History in the Theological Seminary of Virginia, but declined to accept the position, preferring the active work of the ministry to a permanent professorship. He was often in demand to preach in other churches and to deliver lectures.

Dr. Clark took a deep interest, not only in the history of his Church, but in the history of Virginia. Possibly he was one of the best informed persons in this State as to the connection between the Colonial Church and its successor with the political history of the Colony and the Commonwealth. He took a deep pride in the history of his Church and no one was better qualified to vindicate her than himself.

On the 21st day of February, 1899, he was elected a member of the Executive Committee of the Virginia Historical Society and to the duties of this office he gave that zealous and enlightened attention which was a part of his nature. He took a deep interest in the work of the Society.

Dr. Clark was a clear, clean, high and consistent man. His personal fortitude in contending against his physical weakness was remarkable. He suffered much more than was generally understood or even manifested. His versatility and readiness in debates and in impromptu addresses was marked. He had more than ordinary intelligence even among trained and intelligent men. A modest man he made no effort at a display of his learning. Upon vital matters he never allowed his views to be misunderstood. He was absolutely sincere, and without the slightest tinge of hypocrisy; however he might differ with one in judgment he was always the Christian gentleman, always the constant friend, always the bright, brave, kindly companion; always the active and faithful worker in the cause of God and man.



REV. WILLIAM MEADE CLARK, D. D.